

CHAPTER 2

THE PROPOSED ACTION

2.0 INTRODUCTION

The proposed action must ensure that RCA complies with minimum FAA design standards for runway to taxiway separation and runway length for small aircraft forecast to use the airport during the next twenty years. This project will require the relocation and lengthening of a new Runway 16-34; expansion of aprons, taxiways; acquisition of approximately 184 acres of land; and development of hangar areas to accommodate current and future growth. Alternative 2A satisfies these requirements and has been selected as the preferred alternative and proposed action for this project. A detailed discussion of the alternatives reviewed and rationale for selection of this alternative can be found in Chapter 3, *Alternatives Considered*.

2.1 PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS

As the airport sponsor, Ravalli County wishes to implement the following improvements to address the identified needs:

- Construct 75' X 4,200' runway 93' east of the existing runway centerline and parallel to existing runway.
- Shift runway 1,000' to north in Phase 1.
- Acquire approximately 58 acres for runway development and safety areas initially and 20 additional acres in Phase 2.
- Acquire or zone approximately 106 acres for compatible land use (65 DNL boundary outside of the minimum required land acquisition).
- Maintain current weight bearing capacity of 17,000 pounds.
- Runway lengthening to 5,200' (1,000' extension to the north) occurs in Phase 2.
- Reconstruct Taxiway B (parallel taxiway) and connector taxiways.

2.2 PROJECTED SCHEDULE AND COSTS

Initial development is projected to be completed between 2010 and 2017. During this time, land acquisition, construction of new Runway 16/34 (initially to 4,200' in length) and taxiways, and installation of new runway lighting and Precision Approach Path Indicators (PAPI's) are to be completed. This initial development is estimated to cost \$5,721,000.

The remaining development is projected to be completed between 2018 and 2030. During this time, extension of the runway to 5200 feet, apron reconstruction/construction, taxiway reconstruction/construction, and animal control fencing, are to be completed. This remaining development is estimated to cost

\$1,043,000 (does not include the cost of rebuilding aprons or animal control fencing). The estimated total project cost is \$6,764,000 to be completed between 2010 and 2030. Appendix V - *Airport Plans and Construction* addresses the schedule of improvements and associated costs in detail.

2.3 PROJECTED BENEFITS

The placement of the new runway 93' east will provide a safer environment for the type of aircraft now using the airport.

This proposed action also shifts the Runway 34 threshold 1000' further to the north and away from Tammany Lane. Shifting of the threshold increases the height of aircraft on approach from the south over the neighborhood to the south.

Conclusion: These improvements provide for runway/taxiway separation and runway length for the type of aircraft currently using the airport and forecast to use the airport during the next twenty years.

2.4 PROPOSED CONCEPTUAL MITIGATION

Of the affected environments reviewed for this proposed action, three areas were identified as having moderate (measurable but can be mitigated) impacts; 1) biotic resources (general wildlife), 2) noise, and 3) wetlands. Chapter 4 – *Affected Environment, Environmental Consequences and Mitigation* covers these environments in greater detail.

2.4.1 BIOTIC RESOURCES

General wildlife species (i.e. deer, ground-nesting mammals, and birds) may be displaced with the implementation of the proposed improvements. Therefore, impacts resulting from these alternatives were determined to be “moderate” for general wildlife. “Moderate” impacts are defined as those that are measurable, but can be mitigated. Conceptual mitigation includes minimizing impacts to Gird Creek and its associated fringe wetland, the upland areas adjacent to the existing airport development, and where practicable, avoid and minimize damage to and the removal of existing trees within and adjacent to the proposed project areas to maintain adequate desirable habitat for wildlife.

Wildlife/animal control fencing will be installed around the perimeter of the airport in order to discourage (i.e., prevent access) to larger mammal species such as deer, coyote, and domesticated dogs from entering and traversing the airport property. This perimeter fencing will also help to regulate access to the airport property by unauthorized vehicles and persons.

2.4.2 NOISE

All of the alternatives, including the no-action alternative, could result in moderate increases to noise levels due to a potential increase in traffic volumes, regardless of whether improvements are made. Therefore, impacts from all of the alternatives were determined to be “moderate” for noise. Conceptual mitigation includes land acquisition or zoning regulation of those parcels along the easterly boundary of the airport that would be impacted by noise levels beyond the acceptable threshold limits.

2.4.3 WETLANDS

Based on wetland delineation and jurisdictional determination by the Army Corps of Engineers (COE), it was determined that the proposed improvements could impact up to 2.8 acres of wetlands. The proposed improvements would require securing an individual Clean Water Act Section 404 permit prior to project development. Securing an individual permit would require construction or acquisition of compensatory mitigation (at a ratio established by COE). An evaluation of mitigation alternatives for the project site has concluded that compensatory mitigation is available for the proposed action within the same watershed as the airport. The project will secure compensatory mitigation through one or more means, including the Teller Wildlife Refuge, on County-owned property, or on privately-owned property. Securing compensatory mitigation will result in no adverse effect to wetland resources in the area of the airport for the proposed action. Appendix IX – *RCA Wetland Delineation Report* can also be referenced for the wetland delineation of the Ravalli County Airport property.